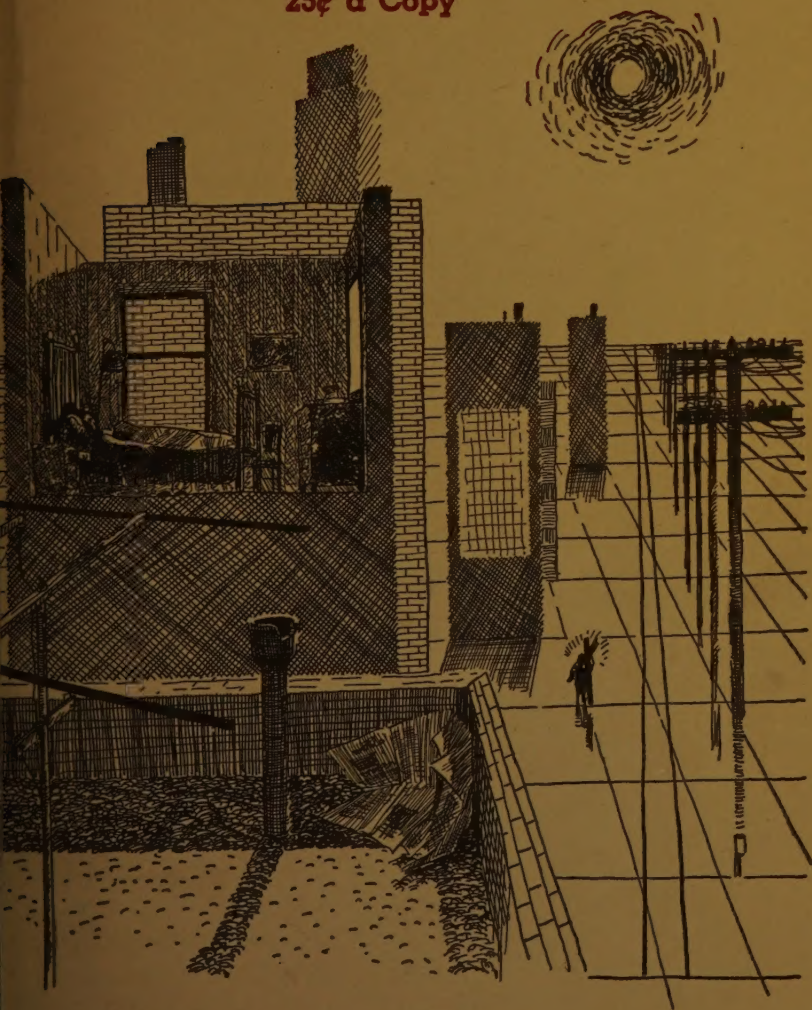


INTEGRITY

25¢ a Copy



April, 1949

Vol. 3, No. 7.

SUBJECT ≈ THE MODERN CITY

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INTEGRITY is published by lay Catholics and
dedicated to the task of discovering the new
synthesis of RELIGION and LIFE for our times.

Vol. 3, No. 7

April 1947

Published Monthly by Integrity Publishing Co., 346 East 86th Street, New York 28, N. Y., TR 9-5176. Edited by Edward Willock and Carol Jackson. Entered as Second Class Matter October 14, 1946 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. under the Act of March 3, 1897. All single copies 25 cents each; yearly subscriptions: domestic \$3.00, Canadian \$3.50, Foreign \$4.00.

INTEGRITY IS INDEXED IN THE CATHOLIC PERIODICAL INDEX.

EDITORIAL



THE modern city such as New York, London, Detroit or Chicago, is not the same kind of community as ancient Jerusalem, pagan Rome, or King Louis' Paris. It is not the same as Sodom or Gomorrha which it resembles, nor is it Augustine's City of God which it resembles not. That these huge wens on the body of the nation are dignified by the name of "cities" is as much an historical irrelevancy as the fact that the steel girders which knit their structures together often bear the inscription "Bethlehem." Whatever dignity we may attach to the words "city" or "Bethlehem" has nothing to do with the cement deserts of the steel corporation that have usurped the titles.

The city that endeared itself to man was the citadel of refuge from enemies, the firm solicitude of law, the center of learning, the seat of government, the apex of culture, the crossroad of travel, the gathering of men in common endeavor, in worship, in work, and in merriment. Beyond the city lay the outlaw, the pagan, the ignoramus and the boor. These were the cities that Christians held dear. These were the great cities, that showed some position and an occasional potentiality to be cities of God.

With such a tradition as this, it is not surprising that the city would be retained in men's minds as the symbol of civilization. Since the civilization was, in its genesis, Christian, then also in men's minds the Cross continued to throw its shadow on the market place. In fact, however, few such cities remain elsewhere than in men's memories. The men of the Enlightenment who saw in their cities the grand expression of a Western culture which identified itself with civilization in the absolute sense, were hardly cold in their graves before the civilizing force of the Western sea had become the mechanizing force of Western scientific techniques. The light-headed heralds of an Age of Man unwittingly introduced the hard-headed manufacturer and the Age of the Machine. The modern city is the product of that age.

The family is a thing that grows on love. A city is great to the degree that this familial quality is present in it. Over its portals the ideal must be inscribed, "Men have gathered here to do each other service, and in communion serve their God." This ideal might be forgotten, but the endeavor to retain it could be carried through the forgetful period by a few vigilant men. If men are long together without such an aim of mutual service,

then instead of a community you will have a crowd. What once a citadel is now a jail. Even though it might have been raised on the site of a splendid community, the modern city has lost the concept of mutual service because force replaced love, the bond that held men together.

The great mass of men would not have given up willingly their crafts or their land, the things around which they wove their cities, had they not been forced to do so. The fact that now the friction of discontent is salved by the unguent of money should not make us forget that when the industrial revolution first began the war was waged with blunter instruments. In England violence was used to try and prevent the enclosure of the commons, and there were riots against the new machines. In the sixteenth century the Statute of Frauds robbed men of their property by demanding a written proof of a title which for centuries had been passed on by word of mouth. From the time when the properties over which the Church had maintained a stewardship were confiscated and became the capital investments of the big landlords, farmers, craftsmen and artisans have gradually lost their privilege of familial living and have been forced into the ranks and files of a propertyless crowd. As the apostles of economic gain won each new victory, a law weighted against the small property owner was erected along the road of industrial progress. Economic tyranny added its burdens to the usual problems of rural life, and it was not long until the allure of the city-factory dispensed with the need of force to bring the young men away from their impoverished countryside. It was the memory of such blighted areas that made the European immigrant hesitate when he reached these shores, causing him to tarry in the city for fear of a country life bereft of opportunity. The girls and boys who even now continue to increase the over-crowdedness of our large cities, leaving their country towns behind, do so because of the injunction levied against all enterprise that is small and outside the sphere of progress.

The carnivorous machine which at first demanded mass attendance, soon demanded mass-consumption. The geographical area in which this mass-attendance and mass-consumption became a manageable crowd is the thing we know today as the modern city. Its people obviously are not incarcerated for their mutual benefit. In spite of the docile automatism which is the disease it breeds, there is still a goodly fraction of the population who desire to leave the city. This desire receives but small consideration

om the men of influence, for it is in the nature of the modern
y to grow ever larger.

An inner compulsion drives the city toward a mock infinity.
ne merchant does not want to lose a single customer, he wants
ore customers. As a buyer of labor, it is to his advantage to have
surplus from which to choose. Goods sold in the city can be
advertised to millions with but a few notices and posters. In-
numerable human wants directly adjacent to the sales tables
arantee a rapid turn-over. Why shuttle single cartons to
olated localities when carloads can be sold en masse within a
y block?

And what of the leaders less avaricious than the merchants?
Why don't they initiate an exodus? The politician needs every
te he can get. It is not virtue alone that endows the politician
om the large city district with the key to national honors. As
vidence of this inner compulsion to a social elephantiasis being
anifest in unlikely quarters, a parishioner in the Bronx who
oke of the need of decentralization to his pastor was reminded
at, after all, with a dwindling population who would support
e Church!

This inner compulsion is not so abstract that it defies defini-
on. It is no more than a concerted avowal or an acquiescent
ence in the face of the fact of men being reduced to the position
means within a technological process. In Christian terms this
to say that man is irrevocably tied to material progress, that his
demption cannot be achieved apart from it, and that virtue
cepts and does not prescribe the framework within which it must
t.

When Christ wept over Jerusalem, and Lot left his wife
hind on the road from Sodom, their tears were shed for cities
at had failed to acknowledge the dominion of God. If, unknown
us, a modern saint drops bitter tears over the edge of the
bservation platform on the Empire State Building, his grief may
e of the same kind, but it will have been evoked by a different
nd of blasphemy. The fact that he would have had to pay
1.20 to be whisked up to the eightieth story in sixty seconds may
e a key to the unusual character of the city he laments, for truly
e character of the modern city, of which New York is the
timate, is symbolized less by lust and the flowing bowl than by
issive men and miraculous machines. The tears would not
ly be for a loving God Who has been forgotten by men, but
r these men who have lost, as a consequence, their dominion
ver matter.

THE EDITORS

Letter to a New Yorker



Some three hundred years ago, v the first Catholic priest set foot o rocky shore, the island of Manha was a prosperous Dutch trading se ment.

Now the Dutch had no kindne their hearts for missionary priests rule, for Catholicism was a reli proscribed by law. The only re they allowed this one to pass unmo

was that he was in such a weakened condition from his re trials at the hands of savages upstate. Even the most suspic burgher could see no threat in this man as he staggered fro ship down at the Battery—disreputable, ragged, weak and ga He was so pitiable that they took him to the governor's house kept him there as a guest, fed and clothed him, until he strong to make the trip back to his native France.

They were sure they had seen the last of him then, for poor creature had suffered terribly, narrowly escaping death. would, they thought, be glad enough to crawl back into a n astery cell somewhere for the rest of his days. They had seen hands—the fingers hacked and torn by cruel Indian tortu What they had not seen was his heart, and so they could not k that it was his life, and not merely his hands, that the priest Jogues had consecrated to the redemption of souls in Ame

Jerusalem, Jerusalem

Two loves have built two cities! Where a martyr drea of the *Civitas Dei*, worldly men have raised up a city that ref magnificently every defect of their twisted nature. Never mankind lifted a higher spire toward Heaven than in this of architectural marvels. Yet it was lifted to his own gre glory, and has perhaps fittingly become a magnet to despair souls intent on self-destruction. Man has been able to raise body higher and higher as he mastered the laws of physics, failing to master the laws of God his soul today finds itse prisoner within his own astounding walls.

This is New York the Wonder City, wondrous because continuous spectacles mask deadly ennui, its feverish gaiety h black despair, its picturesque scenes are inhabited by caw degeneracy, dishonesty—moral decay that would perhaps m Babylon of old seem like a virtuous town, "because all the nat

drunk of the wrath of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and by the power of her wantonness the merchants of the earth have grown rich."

But in becoming the great metropolis of business New York became likewise an amusement center with the air of a perpetual Saturday night. The mad dash for diversion characterizes it better than anything else. Psychologists tell us that we must adjust to our environment, regardless of whether it be an inhuman one or not. The word "escape" is on everyone's lips. Yet is it human to seek the soul's true food and habitation in New York's devil-tail bread and demoralized circuses?

It is a city that exhibits its made-up false face to visitors, presents its autobiography in stupendous figures in guide-books, and lingers in the wistful dreams of the oppressed in other lands, who hear the echo of its frantic laughter and believe it signifies a joyous freedom.

Yet one also discovers it is a place dedicated to man's loneliness without God; to his boredom when he neglects and lets go of things of the spirit; to his sensuality when he no longer knows himself as a creature of two natures; to his need for noise to shut out the shrieking silence in a soul that does not converse with God.

Millions flock here daily to bury their individual loneliness in the great loneliness of the mob, to create the grease-paint luridness of Times Square, the senseless babblings and jungle rhythms which unite the Stork Club and the Third Avenue bars in a solemnity that society columnists would find embarrassing to acknowledge.

On every street corner purity is assaulted by immoral spectacles, by newspaper headlines which stain even innocent hearts with the hateful guilt of others' sins. And here are the shores where the tossed up wrecks of our race lie in grotesque shapes among the merciful and merciless shadows of the skid row.

And how has the Faith fared in all this chaos? We speak only of the Church as an institution in this community.

Certainly there are few other places on earth where one finds such a plenty of churches, schools, religious communities, and other institutions under Catholic auspices. It hardly resembles the Church of the early days





of New York which was born in midst of seething trusteeship wrangle and established by despised and poverty-stricken Irish immigrants.

Yet as business stretched out tireless tentacles taking captive section after section of Manhattan, the church began to suffer the paralysis of isolation in purely commercial districts. An example of this is the venerable Church

of Saint Peter in Barclay Street, New York City's oldest parish which saw the days of the Revolution and the Inauguration of Washington as President of the United States. Engulfed today by office skyscrapers, this shrine of American Catholicism now has only a few families remaining within the limits of a once-populous parish. And these too must soon move out to make room for the encroachments of commerce-minded architects.

Such churches are beset by the difficulties of trying to maintain large buildings erected when Manhattan was still an island of homes. At the same time the priest must labor under the handicap of being almost completely cut off from the souls which he is to shepherd. As a priest he has no entree into the office apartment houses and amusement centers where his people live, and so must remain separated from those for whose salvation he must answer. A religious order has made a recent survey showing that even if all the Catholic churches of the city were filled with Sunday Masses, only one-third of the Catholics would be able to get into them.

Nevertheless there is tremendous activity carried on to meet the needs of the people where and when they can be found. Such activity impresses one with the power exercised by the Church as an organization. Yet it is not wholly a spiritual power.

In their effort to overcome poverty and the prejudice waiting for them on these shores, the Irish Catholics have in late years overshot the mark. As they rose socially, economically and politically to positions of wealth and influence, they have brought with them into high places the Church which was despised when they were despised and is now likewise respected as they are respected.

But somewhere along the line this struggle for due presence and necessary revenue has cemented the relationship between pulpit and the business office. And no man can serve two masters nor does the effort to do so usually result in extraordinary sanctity.

Thus New York's Catholic institutions all too often are patterned after secular ones in every observable detail. Infected with the plague of "bigness" many of them, particularly hospitals and social agencies, sacrifice real efficiency and real service to the temptation to increase and multiply figures rather than charity. Overwhelmed by increasing running expenses and professional salaries, they cannot extend such warm and loving generosity to the great number of poor and needy while still keeping one eye on the unbalanced budget. Besides, the spiritual life of those in charge cannot help but suffer from the effort to combine the life of contemplation with the life of material progress.

While New York, therefore, is a center of great Catholic activity of every conceivable kind, this good activity is frequently confined to the temporal realm and is, alas, not always above seeking worldly ends. The Catholic population, ambitious and numerous, spends itself in some sort of compromise between taking and giving. And thus even the "children of light" attend the grim spectacle, trying to strike a happy balance between the temptations of a corrupt and pagan city and the Cross of Christ.

It should be made clear that we do not include in our summary of conditions those persons, numerically many, who make their homes in New York through force of circumstances but do in any way partake of its spirit. These people, many of whom are members of national and religious groups, have struggled valiantly to carry on in America old-world Christian traditions.

The Desolate House

While our pulses are quickened and our faces flushed by the speed and flashing colors of the city, we are exhilarated as spectators at a circus are thrilled by the dangerous and breathtaking feats they witness. The calliope plays on gaily while therobat dives expertly into nothingness and destroys himself. The crowd claps wildly and cries out "More! More!" at the clown's antics, not realizing that the strange liquid he is drinking is really poison and that in a few hours he will be lying stiff and cold in the drafty room. Yes, we watch with fascination as the hypnotist suavely works his charms with colored balls. We think we are merely being amused with the pretty baubles. We forget that the purpose of the hypnotist is to hypnotize, and that before the cock crows we may have denied our own



E D U C A T I O N

souls. Yes, many times. Yet something within us begins writhe at the performance and to turn away in disgust, even anguish. If you are one who feels that disgust, that anguish today, we say be glad. Welcome it, for it may be the first stirring of that grace which will call you, not without much more anguish and many tears, to your true vocation.

Listen and see if over the clamor and outcry you can hear the voice, infinitely sad, of Him who wept over another city: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathers her young under her wings, but thou wouldst not!"

But if it be God's will that you be gathered, do not wait until you are too broken, until your heart is too cold to your brother suffering, or your soul sealed off with sin.

If you come away from your day's or night's activity with the dry burning of unshed tears behind your eyes and the weariness of despair beating sullenly about you; if you are tired of the circus; if you peer into the crowded thoroughfare and see only great emptiness; if you suddenly stand still on the subway step and ask yourself where you are going in such a hurry; if mere size seems more wearying than impressive and the relentless stimulation seems more and more exhausting; if you look at the man on the park bench and suddenly recognize your own, and eldest brother; if you feel none of these things but only an indefinable restlessness and dissatisfaction with the glamor all about you—then perhaps you are among those blessed enough to run for refuge into the very Heart of Love.

Do not be afraid to leave. No one will notice or criticize you. Anything goes here. You may become a saint or a prostitute. Your neighbor will never frown upon you, for you have no neighbor. The man in the next apartment may be a criminal; he may be a mystic. It makes no difference in the nod that is exchanged if you happen to meet on the stairway.

For in taking from us so many human prerogatives, New York has bestowed upon us one unique and dazzling gift of our own making. Its anonymity, which crucifies us, also makes us free. Here you may preach revolution in the streets without causing as many raised eyebrows as if you merely cleared your throat in a suburban parlor. No, you are not bound to be mediocre; to be bourgeois. And if you try to remain indifferent, the clash of colors, the sharp contrasts will eventually crowd in on you and become unbearable.

There are several hallways leading away from here, but there is only one true door.

The Material Flight

Maybe you dream of having a house in the suburbs. It is quite natural to wish to escape physically from the city, for unless you are among the very few you cannot afford to live very well. For many of its residents, home in exciting Manhattan is an overheated railroad flat, lacking minimum facilities and privacy. Many sleep in windowless rooms, in drafty, damp, roach-ridden, rat-infested old-law tenements. These trapped people are not just the very poor. They are you, me, every one. Particularly if you have children, you will aim at fleeing such grim and squalid surroundings. By living frugally for a few years, you may save up enough money to buy a house on Long Island or in Westchester. There you may surround yourself with safe little walls of material security and spiritual isolation. You will no longer be a slave to the city. You will remove yourself from many disagreeable dissonances and eliminate the nervous strain of metropolitan existence.

Yet before you go, consider the new dangers you will be inviting. Suburbs have been created mainly by business men as a refuge where they may escape from the awful world their business has created and in whose toils the souls of others are mangled.

Beware lest in your neat lawn and well-clipped hedges you too see only an order which is a fitting complement to your own efficiency. Yes, your children may be able to take for granted the stars which tenement kids never see. They may have every material advantage, yet you will be in danger of forgetting that this is Heaven and not Westchester County you are called upon to people. For most, suburban living is at best only another compromise, and at worst a temptation to believe there is no spiritual problem involved and "the better things of life" can quiet your soul's hunger. Too often mediocrity sets the standard here, its handmaids polite conservatism and genteel selfishness. Your spirit which longs for adventures into God's mysteries may be confined to taking its fling only in basement rumpus rooms and on expensive golf courses. The world you create may be as artificial, rootless and vain as the one from which you now flee in horror. And worst of all, you yourself may fall into the habit of balancing between two unreal existences without any noticeable strain. But sudden loss or tragedy disrupt the course of the commuters' special and the hidden and bolted doors of anguish be thrown wide open by a coup de grace, then it will be love destroying at one

blow that ridiculous and stifling security of yours so that you may find the one true door.

The Intellectual Flight

On the other hand, you may be the kind of person who realizes at the outset that money is not the answer. Rather you need some intellectual synthesis, some outlet for your ideas and talents other than on the battlefield of ruthless commercialism. You may be among those seeking the answer in art, literature, political ideologies, philosophical fads. In justified revolt against the despised concupiscence of the suburbs you may even begin to practice a sort of natural asceticism. At least you are willing to be poor. Perhaps you have real artistic talents, unusual intellectual gifts, a highly sensitive temperament. Probably you suffer exceedingly from being a part of New York, crushed in its competitions and beset by its contradictions. If you should hear some persuasive leader give a stirring speech for his cause, you will be tempted to join him, to turn all your energies in one direction, to bestow mistakenly upon his ersatz wares all the devotion due to the heart's real treasure.

Here too you will meet many dangers. It will be easy for you, sincere though you be, to mistake moral freedom for intellectual freedom and to adopt conscious non-conformism and pseudo-bohemian eccentricities. The tragedy likely to overtake you is that human nature by itself cannot replace one corruption with another, often worse, corruption. You may eventually fall into one of those esoteric groups that flourish like exotic and poisonous jungle-flowers. Greenwich Village with all its artistic barrenness, moral perversion, intellectual sterility and wilful irrationality may be your final harbor. You will be like the man who received his inspiration for a painting by staring at an eggbeater until he was entranced by it and then flung himself at the waiting canvas.

But because of your very sensitivity, and the suffering that results when you try to bury it in sin, because you are critical of ideas and motivations, even your own, you may be in a place of advantage to receive the blow of grace.

The Spiritual Flight

Perhaps you were here the night Cardinal Spellman returned from Rome and the Consistory in 1946 and was given a big welcome at the Metropolitan Opera House. You may have seen, as you walked along the Great White Way afterward, those stunning letters that came spilling across the forehead of the Times Building

"Spellman returns," flashed its cryptic beams, "says peace can be found in God alone."

And in these words New York wrote in lights the answer to its own tragedy. It is the sign that bids you welcome when you come to the one door of escape from the city.

For it is only through this spiritual orientation that you can truly take flight. Once inside the door, you will see again three ways to take, and must stop to consider for which road God has chosen you.

First of all, you may discover you have a vocation to the contemplative life. Then, although you have removed yourself spiritually from the city already, its presence will become like a millstone around your neck, its alarms shutting off the only conversation you care to hold. If that is the case then you must take yourself off quickly, beyond "the sink of cities," to some monastery chapel where only the sweet sounds and rhythms of earth and her seasons will disturb your silence. There is probably nothing like living in New York for bringing a contemplative vocation to the fore quickly, provided no obstacles are placed in the way.

Then there are others whom we must mention although their lives are even more hidden and secret than the first and their sanctity, like of the Cistercian saints, known only to its Author. It is as if Almighty God, looking down upon our pagan ways and errors, had chosen for Himself from our very midst victims whose willingness to suffer might hold back His avenging hand. Yes, in every walk of life and in many grim harbors of suffering within our city today, from Harlem to Welfare Island, we find the souls for whose sake our sinful towers and revelries are spared another hour.

We would not point them out, for obscurity is part of their purgatory. They are hidden, often abandoned by all human warmth and consolation, some sealed off forever behind the chill walls of our charities. It is enough to know they are willing to forego all hope on this earth in order that we may one day also come to know and love the Cross to which they are ignominiously and gloriously bound day by day. We do not know you, victim souls. We do not seek to know you. Yet every once in a while amid the drabness and mediocrity of our city the curtain is drawn back and we look upon the face of suffering bare and undisguised. Then we understand how a paralyzed blind woman at one end of 2nd Street may atone for the transgressions at the other end.

And if it should chance to be *your* vocation, let no comment

be made about it. We never know the substance of another's pain although we may know all its causes intimately. The finest gold is tried by fire in secret and the purest canticles are not sung for human ears.

"Blessed Is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord"

Those of whom we can best speak are those called to be apostles in the midst of the city, not separating themselves from it except by the fortress of grace.

If you are among these, you may become a sort of surgeon diagnosing the ills that surround you, arousing yourself and others to take the purgative, rather than the sedative way, cutting away the diseased parts of society sharply, that the whole body may be restored to health. Or you may become more like a nurse, going about comforting and healing the sufferers, casting out evil by your own fasting, and reforming others through having first been reformed yourself to Christ.

It would seem that the vocation of such persons involves accepting the myriad privations and distractions of the city in order to go directly into the rotten heart of it, to those who have no way out whatsoever, and there clear some little space for the Holy Ghost to enter and operate. For these it is necessary to become as poor as the poorest, to share the dirt, lack of privacy, the insecurity—and more than all of these, the continual terrible confusion of those they would comfort in Christ's name. Like the "anchorite who didst dwell with world for cell," they must try to maintain a vigorous prayer-life so that they will not be drawn into activism but may constantly refill the reservoir which is daily exhausted by those who come to them in so much want.

Whichever form of work you choose—and there will be many calling you—you will share with all the others in the performance of works of mercy, spiritual or corporal, and will agree first of all on the necessity for personal sanctification. Whatever your work, your program will consist mainly of prayer and penance, but your days will be lightened by a community spirit and many moments of humor and joy. For you will no longer be concerned about the things that trouble you now, and though your bed may be harder it will afford you a much better rest.

Though their work carries them into many different fields all these persons meet daily at the "immortal table" and form there a bond that makes them one. It is as if the Christians were thrown together today by a force far more powerful than natural liking or common backgrounds and interests. In our day, and particularly in New York City, complicated world issues are rapidly

solving themselves into a simple argument with those who are for Christ on one side and those who are against Him on the other. No one can remain indifferent. It is time to choose your side in the struggle between good and evil, between the woman, Our Blessed Mother, and the serpent, Satan. It is the sheer force of supernatural charity, and nothing human whatever, that binds together Christians of all races, all cultural origins. Individual abilities and talents become somewhat secondary. What must be done must be done through you, not relying on your own strength but entirely on Him Whose harvest your labors shall be.

"Where sin abounded, there grace did more abound." New York, and only New York, could have given birth to this Christian community (many of whose members, like early Christians, share the necessities of life in common) and could have cradled in its steel arms an apostolate that has given inspiration and leadership to the whole world.

Have we given you any hope? Have we tamed this monster metropolis that welcomed you in order that it might destroy you, and filled your ears with wild strains of gypsy music so that your spirit might become ashes before the trial of salvation?

One word more. If you feel drawn to the life of an apostle, do not hesitate because you are not yet perfect. You need only a beginning, with a willingness to go further. And do not wait for lack of courage or talents, for God, if He wants you for His work, will give you His own power. You need but ask!

O Thou who hast taught us to pray together and with one accord and hast promised that when two or three are gathered together in Thy name, Thou wouldst grant their requests, fulfill now the requests of Thy servants, for what is best, granting us in this world the knowledge of Thy truth, and bestowing in the world to come life everlasting (from the Armenian Liturgy).

ELIZABETH M. SHEEHAN



Detroit: City of Internal Combustion

"Dynamic Detroit"—that is what we call it. Some unkind visitors have said that Detroit is dynamite, and others that it is "hell on wheels." One called our city the ugliest in the world, but he must have been one of those intellectuals who never had to meet a payroll.

A Detroit bank recently opened a new downtown branch and honored the occasion with the display of a million dollars in cash. This provided an excellent opportunity for citizens to pay homage to the outward sign of our faith, the green stuff that grows upon the beanstalk of our incessant activity.

Detroit is the Mecca of this pay-as-you-enter civilization. Sometimes a young man may begin with an idea of vocation, of being something, but he is soon made conscious of the necessity of the green tickets of admission to the American way of life, and he sees that the important thing is to make money, to get a job.

Detroit is a synthesis that has never achieved unity. We have borrowed all of our best ideas—the internal combustion engine, interchangeable parts, the assembly line—and out of these we have created the auto industry, which in turn, made modern Detroit. The auto industry is the Maine of industrialism, the exemplar of the problem, and Detroit may well be the laboratory for its solution.

The problem of industrialism stems from the "know how" in which Detroiters take so much pride. This is the knowledge of production methods, of machine culture, of how to divide up the process of making into minute motions, and how to adapt men to the assembly line.

Out of this flower "know how" we have plucked this nettle, the industrial problem. Specialization has produced an elite of experts, and a mass of hired hands. The hired hands are so dependent on the experts, that a big city like Detroit is peculiarly vulnerable to any crisis. Such was the severe winter which overtaxed the pipe lines through which gas flows into Detroit. Many factories were shut and many men were laid off. One is reminded of the despot who, hating the people, wished that they had but one neck so that he could sever it with a blow.

Let's Roll Up Our Sleeves and Get to Work!

Not everyone will admit that there is a problem in industry. Others grudgingly acknowledge it but say that it is too big for their comprehension. Most of us try to ignore it by keeping busy.

I knew an executive who, during the bank holiday of the thirties was plagued with problems every day, and he said: "I wish I could just file cards for about three weeks."

It is human nature to shirk responsibility. Detroit is full of people who perform monotonous jobs, who file cards. Long bit of irresponsibility has accustomed them to use dictated activity as an escape.

The insistence of the auto magnates on "Production, production!" is no less an attempt to escape by oversimplification. They believe any evil may be overcome by hard work. Endowing large research centers to turn science into selling, to create more gadgets, or shape the car to the wind, is their contribution to Detroit's future. Production is what they know, and their factories are orderly because they are run like machines. They do not see why, if everyone minds his own assembly lines, Detroit should not run like a machine. They have only contempt for government intellectuals who collect taxes to rescue the foundlings of industrialism from factory doorsteps.

Detroit is a problem because it is a factory. A factory may be a fine place to make money but it is a poor place in which to live. Detroit is a study in disintegration. The pride of its mass-production is the rationalization of the product into fractions that a moron can be taught to assemble. Scientific management reduces costs but when it infects men it raises some huge debts for future payment. Man is a composite of body and spirit, and cannot be trained to repetitive habits as an animal can, and be content. When skill is separated from labor, and religion from economics, we get into the advanced stages of secularism, which is endemic to Detroit.

"Truth, and I have a bag of money here troubles me . . ."

—*The Merry Wives of Windsor*

Youth coming into a decadent thing like Detroit industrialism gives us a thrill of hope. In hopefulness let us examine the prospects of two young men who are recently prominent in the Detroit scene, and who represent opposed aspects of the redemption of free enterprise: Henry Ford II and Walter Reuther.

Young Ford is the Sir Galahad of enlightened management, the new faith known as "human engineering." (In Detroit everything—animal, vegetable, or mineral—is engineered.) His trail is profit, and his demon, costs. No abstract goals, no pious hopes for him, but "more and better cars to sell for lower and lower prices." Place this alongside the vow of ponderous General Motors for "more and better things for more people" and we get

an inkling of why Detroit has problems. Ford wants most beat Chevrolet and to regain the lost position of his company the auto market. Even his announced efforts at improving employee relations are part of progress toward lower costs. His ideas are described as revolutionary, but they appear to be only a stale copy of those used by the Gibraltar of reactionary management, General Motors.

The original Henry Ford was distrustful of bookkeeping and kept scanty records. Young Ford is convinced that salvation comes from jot and tittle accounting, and has imported General Motors' executives and clerks who are well versed in red tape (I almost said Screwtape.) He is establishing a bureaucracy of clerks.

The status of these courtiers to management has been relatively rewarding and conducive to rugged individualism and pride among them. Cost-conscious management, however, is always uneasy about this non-productive element of expense, and periodically tries to pare it down by consolidating and eliminating jobs. The big corporation surrounds its clerks with pseudo security in the form of life and health insurance and pension plans, but these group plans provide only a mathematical security and depend on the lottery of the budget. Those who prepare the budget always work under the Damoclean sword that slices the budget.

While Ford was building his finance and accounting force, General Motors was going through a retrenchment purge. You can see how, during such a program, rumor and doubt make every white-collar worker feel the actual insecurity of his position.

Ford's trust in this kind of a system is unfortunate, although he is perhaps bowing to the inevitable evolution of giant industry. Usually it proceeds from the original owners or inventors to impersonal financial control. This has always brought finance and accounting machinery that takes away personal worth, as machine technology takes away manual skills. Geographical decentralization means little if every move is prescribed by an anonymous bureaucracy.

Young Henry has a psychological advantage in personal ownership. He seems to be making a genuine effort to win his employees' loyalty, although in an industrial empire such as his, rules, he can only expect the loyalty of the paycheck. He destroyed the foremen's union and now wants to make his foremen part of the management "team," but he is using the same old timeworn devices of paternalism.

There are contradictions between his golden-rule optimism and the facts of industrial life, as when he calls a letter mimeographed and sent to all employees a personal letter; when he tells a group of small business men that he is just another Dearborn businessman; when he tells his foremen that they are part of management, although they cannot hire, fire, regulate their income, or their tenure of work.

The obvious answer to any criticism of Henry Ford is that he is new in the business, he is introducing ideas new to his company, and he is young in years as well as in experience. However, Detroit industry is likely to come to a crisis within the next few years. All that the leaders plan to do is to go about their business and await the charge of the unions, or the uplifted stroke of the business cycle.

Mr. Ford is a Catholic. In his religion there are revolutionary potentialities for the solution of his problems and the problems of Detroit. In that he apparently has not found them, he is no worse than hundreds of other Catholics. Yet his strategic position makes us pray that he will.

Reuther, the Nightmare of Management

Walter Reuther has the jump on Henry Ford in so far as he has avowed a determination to change the present order. The union that he heads is built on a human economy. Human aspirations, needs, and frustrations were the basis of its growth. Individual political ambition and the motive of self-interest played a part, but the common good has a large share in the program of the United Auto Workers. Reuther himself says that he seeks the good of the whole community and he has given previous evidence of his sincerity. He is intelligent and of seemingly boundless energy. It is because his energy was underrated by his opponents, among whom the communists were prominent, that they are eclipsed and he is at the peak of his power. He can present a united union front for the next assault upon the citadel of management.

Reuther has seen that the problem goes beyond wages and hours into the halls of management itself. His famous battle of the books was the first step in his program to secure for labor some participation in the decisions of management. He has seen how futile are wage increases, when the managers retain the power of unlimited price boosts.

Reuther asks for Industry Councils, wherein representatives of management and labor would form a parliament to govern industry. This idea is close to the system of guilds of industries

and professions which is recommended by Pope Pius XI *Quadragesimo Anno*.

The unions have grown to the point where they fight management with its own weapons: economists, lawyers, and statisticians. In bargaining sessions they are ready to document the demands with chart and graph. It has been said that our economy could not stand up under the genuine practice of Christianity, and this brings to mind the speculation that in this war of statistics both sides may prove too much, since it is possible that the auto industry could not survive the payment of just rewards to all at a reasonable price to the consumer.

Mr. Reuther also puts his trust in political action. This is natural since the power of the purse strings would always be decisive if labor and management fought it out alone. The largest gains of unionism were made under a friendly government, and the defeats may come from adverse legislation. Even so, the political solution in these days is a dangerous one.

The whole situation is complicated by the bigness of the opponents. Big unions like big management hover under the danger that an impersonal machinery of dictation will replace man-to-man relationships. The warning of Pope Pius XI is highly applicable, that it is an evil to give to higher organizations what lesser organizations can accomplish.

They Hate Their Jobs

Neither Reuther nor Ford has faced the issue of degradation of work. Ford used an opinion poll and found that, among other things, the workers wanted to be treated as human beings and not as numbers on the payroll, and that they wanted a sense of human dignity that comes from a feeling that their work is important.

It is common opinion that the average auto worker hates his job, and that many work stoppages are inarticulate expressions of protest. No increase in wages will abolish this sense of insult to human dignity.

Peter Drucker, who was one of the judges in General Motors' recent "My Job Contest," has written: "It is even likely that the lack of dignity and fulfillment which is so evidently the major problem of industrial society may be only aggravated by emphasizing economic opportunities and rewards . . . that dignity and fulfillment are so difficult to achieve . . . because of . . . exclusive concern with economic advancement."

. . . because thou art lukewarm, neither cold nor hot . . .

We are forced to conclude that neither of our young hopefuls has the solution for the problems of Detroit.

At this point we should introduce our heal hero, the young man of Catholic Action. He should come from the wings, on fire from prayer and fasting, with at least partial plans toward the solution of our evils. Unfortunately, this script has not yet been written.

We have plenty of Catholic activity, but when we seek that which is aimed at changing our world, at restoring all things in Christ, we find that Detroit is white for the harvest and the laborers are few. Two groups are working for a changed order, the Catholic Workers and the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists. The Catholic Workers are feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless. The ACTU is working hard at meeting union problems with Christian solutions, at forwarding the Industry Councils plan, and at presenting the truth about labor problems in their weekly paper, *The Wage Earner*, a truth which is not obtainable in the *Detroit News*, *Times*, or *Free Press*.

The most ardent member of the ACTU will not maintain that he has been outstandingly successful in the main purpose of restoring all things in Christ. Activists have tried not to appear as a Catholic faction, in a faction-ridden union.

In our social apostolate, it has been said that we Catholics have seized upon the natural principles in the encyclicals and neglected the moral revolution which was set forth as an indispensable preliminary to the reform of institutions. We have assumed that too much emphasis on the religious basis of our principles would arouse opposition that would nullify results. We may have neglected our spiritual weapons.

Perhaps we might examine our consciences in the light of what John Cort wrote in 1944:

There is no point in trying to determine how much we were being "all things to all men," how much we were simply afraid to push the full embarrassing doctrine of Christ "and Him crucified." In any case we paid . . . in Catholic workers whom we could not arouse from their indifference . . . materialism . . . self-interest . . . ambition. . . . For the awkward truth is that any Christian agitator is in a peculiarly difficult position . . . he cannot appeal to the base emotions: hatred, greed, personal ambition. . . if he is unwilling or unable to appeal to the difficult motives of self-sacrifice, love, salvation through service (no matter how lowly and ill-paid) then he is reduced to those tried and true

fiascos, the appeal to decency, honesty, enlightened self-interest, democracy, brotherhood. . . . Now as always it is either all, nothing or "because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot" thou shalt be condemned to ineffectual mediocrity.

The problem is so great that one would have thought that there would have been a general flight to the spiritual as being the only solution of unlimited possibilities. There is much spirituality among Catholics that is unrelated to the problems of the community, and much secular activity that is not related to the spiritual. Too many of us think in terms of "selling" Christianity instead of living Christ. It is discouraging to see the gap between the far-sightedness of our spiritual leaders and the bread-and-butter thinking of the man in the pew. When Catholic commandos are demanded, we remain in basic training.

We need to apply theology to technology. We need a few intellectuals who will study our situation in a spiritual light, with an attempt to bring forward a Christian plan that goes beyond generalities. We need a few worker-scholars to attempt that bridge that Maritain hoped for, the linking of the Catholic intellectual movement with the workers' movements, the introduction of Christian philosophy into the market place.

We need a few apprentices in sanctity, a few worker-contemplatives. Prayer and thought must precede action. Contemplation should also precede action, for our salvation rests finally in the will of God, and our principal activity should be to seek His will and become His instruments.

JOHN C. HICKS



PROCESS OF MANUFACTURE

Trim the motor, clutch and brake it,

Paint the body bright and bake it,

Get the customer to take it,

Desecrate the men who make it.

Call to Sainthood on Mott Street

Before Mott Street, poverty was poor but proud.
Clean but bare.
Vowed and offered.
Most monastic.

On Mott Street, the cigarette crushed in the crust
Despoils the dinner of the unwashed poor
Whom poverty has pinched to such a wizened shape.
We say in near-surprise that these sad men have souls
And are the Lord's. Watched, as the "sparrow's fall."
And do they know? Could any other knowledge stay them here?
Is it theology that keeps them living still?
Or fear? Or hope tomorrow's garbage yields a moulded loaf—
A bone not cleaned by one who sat at table without hunger?
What is their courage, and from where?
These of the ragged coats—the matted hair.

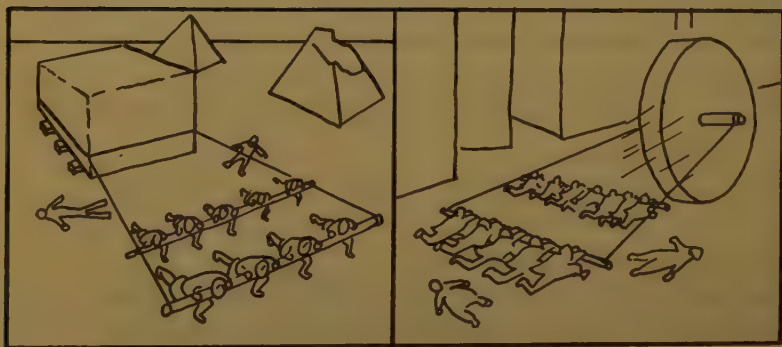
Those who sleep on cold floors in subway shelters
Get poor courage and worse comfort out of bottles.
But is that their tragedy?
Do men drink themselves to this unless some darker drink is
poured them
Which they know not how to drink?

One, sleeping in a church I saw—
Stretched full upon the bench in un-churchgoing fashion.
Heard moans which may or may not have been prayers,
But probably were not.
They took him out—
But was he desecration?
I do not know. I only know I saw him there again,
Standing behind the crucifix,
Pointing a mouldy finger at us all;
And on his lips—*J'accuse.*

What answer can we make him, Lord?
Or any desolate?
Poor hapless, hopeless ones.
What answer make inevitable wars—
Relentless destiny—impending dooms

Moving as surely to conclusion as Greek tragedies?
No half protest.
No gestures, noble though they be.
No, nothing that stops short this side—
The bright and seeming folly of the saint!

LILLIAN AUDREY ROUSER



Before . . . and . . . After

Chanson for the Peacemakers

The dead lie deep around Krakow
Let's hold another meeting now,
Merrily, merrily.

For last year's dead are last year's leaves
Or that's what cunning time believes,
Merrily, merrily.

While famine stalks for hungry fools
We'll argue parliamentary rules,
Merrily, merrily.

If we must work, so must we play
There's nothing like a fine soiree,
Merrily, merrily.

For what can equal good champagne
Diluted with a people's pain,
Merrily, merrily.

What is this chill that strikes the bone
Where is the voice whose awesome tone
Wearily, wearily.

Stills like a plague our merriment
(Which, Heaven knows, is innocent!)
Eerily, eerily.

"As you are now, so once were these,
Rome, Athens, Carthage, Tyre and Thebes,
Verily, verily."

ROSEMARY FROST

11
SUCC

SURVIVAL
← SALV
← PER

EAT
DRINK
LIVE
BE MERRY

DRINK
GOLD
LIVE
BE MERRY

If you
BE MERRY

NEVER
DIE



DRIVE →

STREET
ANE

IS YOUR
MONEY
SAFE!

Languid
Lust
NOW PLAYING

DO YOU
WORRY
STOP
READ
STOP WITHIN
10 FEET



Paradoxical Providence

From Prospect Terrace, where Providence had its beginning you can look down into the thriving metropolis and witness the inconsistencies which persist not only superficially, but which intrude upon the city's spiritual life and thereby provide for a state of conflicts in which 300,000 souls are woefully embroiled. Indeed, it may be more accurate to say that these manifestations are the visible expressions of an unintegrated, misdirected inner life; so that you wonder if this vibrant cell be ganglion or cancer.

Once from this terrace, Roger Williams, in flight from Boston's persecutionists, looked down upon a wooded river valley and saw therein the answer to his prayer: "a refuge for distressed consciences." This founding principle precipitated the Providence paradox, an influx which made the city a shelter for liberal idealists on the one hand and a cave for the spirits of Adullam on the other.

Today, corresponding inconsistencies are everywhere evident. We have a heavily-populated, industrial city clinging to ancient traditions. Street names like Pound, Sovereign, Shilling and Doubloon are difficult to reconcile with the city's name, but there are Benevolent, Hope, Peace and Benefit. The Democratic populace supports only one daily newspaper, one with a Republican bent. The Providence River and inner reaches of Narragansett Bay, though naturally beautiful and practical in contour, are pitifully polluted and marked. There is the magnificent beauty of Roger Williams Park during the day; at night it becomes the scene of corruption. The girl who sings Gospels praises from the choir loft on Sunday changes her costume on Monday and renders "sugar blues" for a cafe's patrons.

So the spiritual foundation insisted upon by Roger Williams has crumbled, and the blemish that remains can only become rubble too unless there are workers willing to repair the foundation. Alas! The need for rebuilding has been recognized, but the City Planning Commission, the cognizant agent, is typically mortar-minded. Any problem complicated by moral responsibility such as racial segregation, is carefully skirted. And who are we, the citizens, to object or to suggest?

It is for us, rather, to live the reticent, bourgeois life which abounds on these plantations. It is for us to succumb uncritically to the practices of capitalism and mass production; to yield to the antiquated forms of rule which never change until the ruler deems it expedient; to keep the dozens of movie theaters filled; to keep

horses and dogs and midget autos racing around in expensive
es; to guard carefully against any intruder who sponsors a
ge. Let television in, but keep spiritual vision out. Make
to prevent the darkening of the city by industrial smoke, but
not the sooty tactics which blacken the hearts and souls of
ers. For this, after all, is Providence.

In Providence, religion, which should be the sap of the tree
fe, is only a crooked limb. There is a lack of consciousness
ower; a reluctance, as in other phases of local living, to con-
any new departure. It is this obsequious loyalty to tradition
h precludes revolutionary action on the spiritual plane. What
that George Eliot said of the Englishman? That he didn't
y to what extreme he should practice his religion; he only
y not to go to extremes. The same can be said of the Provi-
e citizen. Catholicism in Providence is anemic because it
to the heart but the head and the hands are too absorbed in
hings of the world. The churches are filled on Sundays. But
n the Mass is over, the secular habits again prevail. Of course,
of us completely miss the meaning of Mass.

The annual charity drive is always a tremendous success.
and poor contribute generously and pastors beam from the
ts. But the beggar is turned away from the doors of these
generous donors. He will just have to do business with one
e many modern agencies.

Our weekly Catholic paper confines itself, for the most part,
ligious announcements. But this is merely the mirror of our
olicity. How can the press be more catholic, more vibrant
the weekly Catholics who expect no more? If we refuse to
stianize our daily lives, how can our Christian paper cope with
ning but Sunday pieties?

When we make the sign of the cross, we are satisfied that
re of the Faith. It is ours to lock in our hearts. We do not
ze the significance of the Cross. We reject thought. Thought
plicates matters. The grass is green; two and two make four;
is a gift. So go to church on Sunday to keep the Faith; it is
ble to go there and continue to believe that grass is, of itself,
a; that two and two, of themselves, make four. It is the going
urch that is Catholic. There is little attempt here to bring
re and arithmetic and six more days a week into harmony
an Infinite God.

The Catholic press could conceivably rectify this indifferent-
with the cooperation of its readers. But the one is somehow
ied with the other, and the feeling is mutual.

The spheres of operation of governing bodies, of church of writers and the rest have been defined meticulously by RO Williams. These definitions are our traditional guide lines, and if we should transgress them, as we are wont to do occasionally in our careless forgetfulness, we are invariably reminded of this by our reliable guardian daily, the *Providence Journal*; so when the Police Commissioner is cheered by some quarters for banning "Volpone," it is in the *Journal's* province inevitably to point out that the Commissioner is, of course, operating outside his sphere.

In the founding principle, however, which was considered first and foremost, namely the tolerance of all creeds, we need no reminders. The pity of it all is this: in nurturing this tolerance we have neglected to nourish our own sets of beliefs, our own principles, until they have become so nebulous they are hardly definable. Instead of throwing open the gates to understanding, each sect has abandoned its fortress of faith and has pooled its credo with all others in the melting pot that is the city. Here lies the recipe for secularism, served lukewarm.

And that is why the sap is gone from the limb. That is why, in Providence, there is no drama that is distinctively Catholic, distinctively Baptist, or distinctively anything else; there is no radio, no press, no action that is not besmirched by the neutral flavor of the melting pot. That is why indifference has set in like a drought, and the myopic citizen is content to go the way of the flesh—to live in a parish, but not live a parish life; to know a priest's name, but not know the priest; to support charities, but not to slight the two horse-racing tracks in the vicinity; to sing the praises of free enterprise, and avoid the "danger" of a movement like the co-op; to accept education as it is, to accept government as it is, and never attempt a correlation. There is a Catholic college here; what imprint has it on the city's culture? The Catholic college graduates have apparently accepted the secular standard. Success for the layman is measured by income, family—or—preferably—both.

Catholic societies are little more than secular societies with Catholic names. Their activity lies in their social functions. Retreats and days of recollection are rare. Parish organizations reach the ultimate in Catholic action when there is an eighty per cent turnout for monthly Communion. As elsewhere in this fair land, comic books, the *Reader's Digest* and the Books of the Month comprise the bulk of the reading diet. A few Catholic book clubs are struggling for survival. It seems that the best work is being done in the smaller, poorer parishes.

The liturgy must be more of a mystery to Providence Catholics than to any others in the world. Seldom is the Mass explained from the pulpit. And where else is there to be found the rows of bowed heads and expressionless faces during the consecration? Count the people, then the missals, and shudder at the discrepancy. Where else are organists permitted to play waltzes and romantic ballads during the holy sacrifice? There is no active participation of the laity at Mass. Providence is full of spectators.

Here we have a city of approximately 300,000 people, predominantly Catholic, letting their religion grow stiff and cold in neglect. With pat satisfaction they observe the almost futile sincere efforts of Jehovah's Witnesses in the crowded city streets. "To what avail," they sigh, "from all that work, there is no appreciable harvest." They do not stop to think that a dormant organism will cease to function.

In the past, before the turn of the century, Providence sought to preserve the family ideal. The home has not yet lost all of its deserved prestige in the development of individuals. A healthy family life is still widely considered to be the *sine qua non* of a healthy community. But with industry gradually making demands of its citizens, bringing such inhuman pressure to bear upon them during the day that they seek all forms of pleasure during the night, the home is exerting less and less influence. And the Church is slow in coming to the rescue.

To its credit, Providence has always been conspicuous for its care of helpless and indigent people. But few of us allow this care to entail any personal inconvenience.

The gladdest note of all has been sounded here in the field of labor-management relations; and this awareness and consequential response have been made, happily, by the Church. A system of night schools has been organized over the past few years. Scholars and experts lecture and discuss the burning problems of labor relations. All are invited to attend free of charge.

As though it were not enough to be the slaves of tradition, Providence people are also content to be the puppets of questionable leaders. Catholics, especially, still suffer from a terrific inferiority complex and have an exaggerated dependence on bosses. And, though we pride ourselves on tolerance, the Negroes are crowded in the worst slums and are overwhelmingly handicapped in seeking employment. Once Jews invade a neighborhood, real estate values take a tumble. Italians have been cramped together on Federal Hill because, allegedly, "they like to live that way."

And that ancient "tolerance," which was nothing more than an adherence to religious individualism, has necessarily rejected the dogmatic faith of the Catholic Church, a rejection under which Catholics still pale. So Catholic landlords, like other landlords, object to children. And Catholic landlords, too, were shocked recently that a public official, whose capacity it is under the law to serve eviction notices to unfortunate families, sought the highest law of this kingdom and showed the greatest concern and solicitude for these families by obtaining continuances for them, and by advertising at his own expense for homes, and by appealing to church societies to form cooperative building groups as a remedy for the housing situation. Oh, what a rare man is he in Providence! His cry is a lonely one, and seldom heeded.

As far as Catholics are concerned, correction lies in two directions. First of all, we must integrate religion and living. It is not enough to wear Catholicism like a badge on one's lapel. When we divorce living from religion, what have we but a corpse? We must recognize that we have been mesmerized by the materialistic world, that we must equip ourselves with a new set of values. For them, we shall go to God. We must cease to regard mystics as queer people and apostolates as off-color, radical movements. We shall do this by becoming mystics and attaching ourselves to an apostolate.

Secondly, we must break down clericalism. We shall accomplish this by knocking down the barrier between priest and layman, and this by bringing our problems, our complaints to the priest. We must show him the vacuum if he cannot see it. But it is for the priest to break away from the church and the rectory, to see from close-up what the parishioner is up against. Lay leadership should not be merely nominal as it now is. Cooperation between priest and layman should be improved while lay responsibility should be increased. Ecclesiastical authorities should more sympathetically hearken to the revolutionary shouts of a few "radical" Catholics; those few may have the panacea. The liturgy should be made less exclusive. Singing words—words with meaning—should spring from the lips of the man at Mass in active participation with the celebrant.

These things—cooperation, union—are not mere political expedients. Christ used them. The people of Providence must adopt them too.

Can we place our hope in the young and in the ever-strengthening Catholic school system where it's not against the law to show the children that God is the satisfaction of their

arts' hunger, that all they learn only manifests the wonderful
ure of their Creator, their Redeemer, their Final End? Perhaps.
first Catholic leaders must shake off the fear of risk and
venture. They must recognize reality and grapple with it openly.
d has given them the weapons.

We have been caught in the parade of material progress on
one hand; retarded by a conventional, traditional conservatism
the other.

Paradoxically, the true meaning of the word "providence" is
known here.

Our trust must be extricated from the clutches of misleading
ssianisms and placed in the kindly hands of the Eternal Being.
th His help, nothing is impossible.

WILLIAM MCNAMARA



LET'S BE PRACTICAL

The sight of overcrowded flats
You think I should abhor?
Just tell me of a better place
To open up a store.

Spade Work in London

An unimpressive young man stood on a wooden platform at the corner of a quiet street one Sunday evening, and those who had sought no other entertainment had gathered round him. To the casual observer it sounded as though they were all shouting at once, unless you happen to know that a dozen people can easily sound like fifty if they give their minds to it. The young man was doing his best to tell them about purgatory. As we passed by on the other side of the road we agreed that this kind of thing could do no service to religion. My companion was an old-fashioned Anglican, with a strong sense of decorum which was outraged. I lacked this quality, and was all for spreading the Faith, but did not believe that this was a good way to set about it. How could any subject be discussed satisfactorily in such a back garden? It appeared to attract the wrong kind of attention—the fury of bigots impervious to reason, who only succeeded in making a reasoned approach to any subject impossible, and the idle interest of young folk hoping for a fight.

This reaction is not uncommon. It is apparent when someone how it gets known among your friends that you speak for the Catholic Evidence Guild. "But does it really do any good?" they ask anxiously, quite sure that it does not. Some even go so far as to say, rather patronizingly, that the old Irishman with his rosary does far more, and argument never really convinces anyone. They point to the influence of a good Catholic life.

No one would wish to belittle the rosaries said by the old Irishman, the middle-aged Englishwoman, the American school-girl, the Breton peasant, or anyone else. We need them all. Even if there are other forms of prayer, and it is possible that there may be something pleasing to God in the action of one who, educated in a tradition of reticence, stands on a platform in a public place and first says his prayers out loud and then tries to collect a crowd which does not much want to be collected in order to interest them in something they do not much want to hear, because he believes he ought to. Noisy crowds, by the way, are not the worst of our troubles. Try talking to a crowd that simply walks by with its nose in the air! Much as I love physical comfort I would soon wear a hair shirt for the evening, and would far rather say the rosary. This speaking business does not begin and end with one public appearance. About lunch time we begin to search the streets for a cloud the size of a man's hand likely to turn into a steady downpour. Luck is usually out, even in this climate. As

ternoon wears on and we rack our brains to prepare a good, interesting and compelling lecture, we wonder why we do it. We usually have no appetite for tea. Afterwards we begin to feel so uncomfortable that we wish we had already begun and knew the worst. After the meeting is over we have a sore throat and an unquenchable thirst, and someone in the crowd will almost certainly take us aside for a heart to heart talk about the problem of evil, or birth control. When we get home we lie awake till the small hours thinking of the magnificent answers we ought to have given. Considering penance is being recommended on all sides, and hair shirts and the discipline are not much in use these days, I cannot imagine why more people do not go in for this form of mortification.

Curiously enough, the actual speaking is the least painful part of the business as a rule, except in an empty street. It is like the blitz in this, that your mind is kept so busy that you do not have time to think of your feelings.

I am not, of course, suggesting that we all take to street-corner speaking in a spirit of penance. Most of us do not. Usually we do it because we know that some one has got to put the Faith across, since most of our fellows simply do not know anything about it. We cannot get into print, and no one would read us, probably, if we could, and we realize that Our Lord did not tell the Apostles simply to pray and set a good example, but to teach all nations—deliberately stick their necks out for a noose, in fact. Before the people can live they must believe, and before they can believe they must know and at any rate partly understand. Their salvation is to be built into Christ's Body and take part in His work, not just to scrape into Heaven on their own account, and for this they must know what they are doing. A good example will dispose them to think well of the Church, but it will not necessarily tell them what it is all about, and it is a fact that in this age of compulsory literacy most people cannot, do not or will not read. They can spell out words, but not so easily that they can take in ideas at the same time, and that means that literature intended for the masses must be very simple indeed, and like all simplifications leave out a great deal. These people are the very ones least likely to know well-informed and well-read Catholics. They are not really simple people—they are half-educated and half-sophisticated. They have heard titbits of popularised science and scraps of economics and odds and ends of backstairs history. They have a vague idea that socialism and irreligion stand for progress, and religion is out of date and in some sinister way linked

up with the ruling classes—they heard someone say so—but they get it all at second and third hand. There is no God, and Karl Marx is his prophet. They would not go to the lectures organised by some enterprising parishes for non-Catholics for fear of being "got at," and it must be admitted that some Catholics would not attract anyone toward the Church. And we do not only mean those who help to fill the prisons, for anyone with average sense can see that they are not what the Church is trying to produce. There are the good ones who are not good enough, like ourselves. One way to reach these people is by the street-corner meeting where they can hear the Faith described clearly and simply and have their questions answered on the spot in an informal and friendly atmosphere; and so we go out and talk to them. But does it do any good? A convert here and there, perhaps, but does it

As a matter of fact I have been told by experienced priests that practically all their converts pass through Catholic Evidence Guild meetings at some stage of their conversion. Conversion with most people is not a sudden revelation, but a slow breaking down and building up process, going on over years. Prejudices are removed one by one, by all sorts of apparent accidents—contact with Catholics, books, discussions, and so on, and information gained. Then some chance remark suddenly brings everything into line, and often it is a very chance remark indeed. The miracle has happened, and now we see. None of us expects a heckler to see the light at the end of a meeting. Indeed a certain type of heckler, though useful for collecting a crowd and breaking the ice is unlikely ever to see it. He is far too wedded to his prejudice. We do occasionally hear, sometimes years afterwards, of someone received into the Church after listening week after week to some speaker or other; sometimes we hear it because the convert joined the Guild himself, but this is quite rare. What we are doing is to prepare the ground and dig the weeds up. The Church in this country which suffered the Reformation has a vast deal of weeding to do before she can hope for flowers and fruit. Most non-Catholics see her through the distorting glasses of almost forgotten prejudice.

Looking back I should say that this prejudice is less bitter than it was twenty or thirty years ago, and less ill-informed. There may be due to indifference, I am not sure. For a time it probably was, but there seems to me to have been in the last few years a renewed interest in religion, and some appreciation of the fact that the Church has something very much to the point to say. There may be more open irreligion and open immorality than for

many years, but I think fewer people now call this progress and enlightenment. The Catholic Evidence Guild by merely existing at all has helped to explode many old prejudices, especially the one that the Church shuns the light of day, and will not stand inquiry. It is far more generally recognized nowadays that the Church is not a quaint foreign superstition found in backward countries, but has a reasoned case and is prepared to explain, and reason, and answer questions. Indeed the trouble taken to get to the bottom of a question is often a pleasant surprise to the inquirer. The people who attend our meetings, and with many it becomes a habit, can see that we are trying to help them, not to score off them, and often come to have a sort of affection for us.

This does not stop them doing their best to score off us, but sometimes prompts them to offer us chewing gum and good advice afterwards, and to ask after any speaker they have not heard recently. The atmosphere is in the main a friendly one, even at an apparently hostile meeting. Three quarters of the crowd never opens its mouth, and often the very hostility of the noisy heckler makes the rest of the crowd sympathetic toward the speaker. Physical violence, which is very rare, has generally increased the Guild's popularity. In fact, we quite miss the Protestant Alliance now that it has all but disappeared.

In their place we still have the communist, though he has been quieter lately. He is more difficult to answer, but more worth answering, because he belongs to the present or future and not to the past, and must be answered on a deeper level. Our present-day, quieter crowds are more difficult to collect, keep and interest, and much more discouraging. The digging often gets very heavy indeed, but is probably far more necessary, for we are not now dealing with dead problems but living ones. We also know that large numbers of Catholics (many of them lapsed) attend our meetings and find them most helpful. What one speaker says is heard not only by the listeners he can see but is often passed on to their friends and their friends' friends.

There is another class of people whom the Guild benefits—possibly even more than the crowd, and that is the speakers themselves, as anyone will realize who has spoken on the outdoor platform for any length of time. What we put into the work is more than repayed here and now by what is given us. We are, for example, compelled to think and think hard. No wooly dreaming or shirking of difficult issues. The crowd soon cures you of that kind of thing. We are also compelled to read a great deal that we would never have got down to if we had been left to

ourselves, and we are compelled to pray. It is always stress that we ought to spend as much time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament as we spend on the platform, and we have regular afternoons of recollection and regular week-end retreats. These are optional. We work for the Guild in our limited leisure, and its rules are elastic. Obviously we must not scamp our normal duties or neglect our families. But pray we must, however we manage it. If that side of Guild activity is allowed to lapse, the speaker generally becomes discouraged and drops out.

Then there is the support we have from the other members. From the moment we join the Guild we belong to a very large family of brothers and sisters who are always ready to help with our problems, advise us in our reading, encourage us or, if necessary, pick holes in us with a complete absence of ceremony. It would not give the impression that no false note is ever struck for we are all subject to original sin, but the Guild certainly has a fine corporate spirit. Even when one is taking a meeting alone one knows one has the support of the others. Seniority, in so far as it is observed at all, which is not much, goes by speaking experience rather than by years, brilliance, learning or reputation, and a good hardworking plodder who turns up, wet or fine, prepares his lectures well, and goes wherever he is sent is far better thought of than a temperamental genius who may be most impressive on the platform. Actually we do not get very many temperament geniuses; most of the exceptional brains we have keep their temperaments well under control. The majority of us are not at all exceptional. We are obscure, ordinary individuals who knead precious little till the other speakers taught us. Still, our knowledge, pooled, mounts up well, and we hold our ideas in common. Anybody can borrow anyone else's, and we all do. No one is obliged to become a speaker, and quite a number of people who come to our lectures and training classes never do, but we are glad to have them, for they can pray for our intentions and they are learning to know the Faith and to help others to know it. No one minds how slow you are to begin with, and of course no one is allowed to speak in public until he has mastered at least one subject; Confession, the Marks of the Church, or Papal Infallibility are popular subjects with beginners. He then prepares a lecture on his chosen subject and delivers it to the class, which heckles him unmercifully, and if he can get through this ordeal without losing his head or his temper he is tested, thoroughly and severely, by a priest and a "devil's advocate" who do their best to tie him into knots. If they do not succeed in doing so, he is allowed to

ture on that subject, with an experienced chairman. He will then take tests on other subjects and when he has got over his first "teething troubles" and has had several tests and a good general background he will be allowed to act as chairman himself, and will study more advanced subjects such as the divinity of Our Lord and the existence of God. Lectures on these subjects are then given by priests. By this time speaking will have got into his bones and only doctor's orders will stop him. Speakers have then known to leave the Guild for one reason or another for years, and then come back because they cannot help it—and *still* feel nervous before the meeting. And we probably all said at one time or another that we could not possibly do it, just as you, dear reader, are saying now.

There has always been a high percentage of converts among Catholic Evidence Guild speakers. Partly, of course, this is because by the time they have finished explaining what they have come to their friends and families they fall into it naturally. But I think there is another reason for it. They appreciate how completely crazy the Faith can look to the uninformed outsider. It looks so crazy and unreasonable that no one would think of looking for a solution to the world's problems unless someone tells them why they should do so. It is no use patiently waiting for them to be attracted by good examples—they are far more likely to be put off by bad ones. Even if our example makes a favorable rather than unfavorable impression they probably will not think of talking us about it, often because they are shy and do not know where to begin. We must go out and compel their attention. It will not be done all at once. Most of our pitches took some time to work up. Many had to be abandoned during the war because of the blackouts and lack of speakers, and now we have built some of them up again. It is most slow and discouraging work, like the slow drip of water wearing away stone, and if we are going to make any impression on the stone before the tap is turned off we shall want a great deal more water dripping a great deal longer. Not every government permits this type of open discussion, and time may be getting short. Every day young Catholics are being lost to the Church, often because they left school too young and forgot what they learned there. They are gathered up and led astray by communists, fascists and atheists who have glib solutions for obvious evils. These Catholics do not know the answers. It is not fair to them not to help them and it is not fair to the millions who never even had the Faith not to give them the chance of hearing it. It is not charity to tell them,

but justice. Just as those who find themselves rich in material goods are bound to share with those less fortunate, so Catholics rich in the Church's treasures are bound to share them with the hungry and desperate—even if they fling them back in our teeth.

Street-corner speaking may not be everyone's particular work, though we have known such unlikely-looking people who do it really well that we should hesitate to rule out anyone but a deaf-mute. On the whole the crowds like speakers who seem to be "just like themselves." As I said previously, most of us begin with very little knowledge. We learned as we went along. We have to rely very much on the Holy Spirit and our guardian angels. Experienced speakers can generally remember many occasions when a particularly good answer or illustration occurred to them for the first time on the platform. Do not think, however, that this means we can get out of the drudgery of preparing lectures. It most emphatically does not.

To start a Guild in a new town very little equipment is required. Since each Guild is directly under the control of the Bishop his consent is necessary, and a priest should be found to be director of studies. Religious orders, such as the Jesuits and Dominicans, are invaluable. A few copies of the *Catholic Evidence Guild Training Outlines*, a few people of either sex and any age who are prepared to take on anything, and a market place, public park, or piece of waste ground for the meeting are the only other requirements, though a library and someone who has previous experience of outdoor speaking are useful. All you have to do now is to get your classes started—lectures to study doctrine and "practise nights" to practice lecturing. It is as simple as that. At no crowd I ever met is so bad as the one you are always afraid you are going to meet and never do.

C. M. LARKINS



THE NATIVES

They didn't come to see the sights,
Their role is just to be the sights.

THE FAILURE OF TECHNOLOGY *

On Utopia

Stories of mechanical utopias, as a glance at literature shows, far from rare; on the contrary, there are so many of them and they find readers so readily that one is justified in assuming a general need for literature of this sort. It could be asked why it is that the machine in particular furnishes so much stuff to the mind of utopian turn. In former times, such a mind found its inspiration in the state, and the book that has given its name to the whole species, Thomas More's *De optimo reipublicae statu, sive nova insula Utopia*, was a tale of the state. The changed subject matter reflects a change in the interests of the readers of such tales. Their interest is not aroused by what is accomplished, real, and completely within our grasp; it is satisfied neither with the past nor with the present—it turns to the possibilities of the future; it feeds on what might happen. The utopian tale demands an image capable of rational development and expansion, and the best serviceable image of this nature that can be found today is the machine. There is no other that could offer competition. Even a social utopia would lose its glamorous appeal if it were based on technical progress. Without this basis, it would carry no conviction.

The utopian writer is neither prophet nor visionary, not even when his predictions have come true. No one will look for prophetic gifts in a Jules Verne or a Bellamy, for they lack almost everything that makes a prophet. Most of all, they lack the vocation, the call, and with it also the necessary wisdom, and the language in which this wisdom speaks. At best, they make a lucky guess that something will happen. They play with the imaginary, they play with the future, but it can never have for them the certainty it has for him who thinks and lives in religious terms. What they project into the future is merely a possibility emerging in the present, expanded by them in a logical and rational manner. Nor would it be fair to demand more of them. From prophecies and visions we expect infallibility; that they come true with absolute certainty. But of a utopian tale we demand no more than a certain appearance of credibility: it must satisfy our intellect by a measure of probability. For what is entirely incredible and unlikely produces only boredom and discomfort; it is not

* A reprint of two chapters taken from the recently published book *Failure of Technology*. The book may be purchased from Henry Regnery Co., Hinsdale, Illinois. . . . (\$2.75)

worth bothering with. The fantasy, therefore, which would attract our notice and our interest will do well to appeal to our intellect. It must sway us by its coherence, by its consistency, by the intellectual detachment of its argument. He who wants to lend probability to the improbable must do it by his soberness of presentation and by the baldness of his style. And those, indeed, are generally the means by which the writers of utopias lure us, whether they carry us to the moon, or to the center of the earth, or to some other spot. In order to conceal the fantastic nature of their fantasies, they call in science.

Just what, then, makes a tale utopian? It is the blending of things that cannot blend, the going beyond limitations, the drawing of unjustified conclusions from premises that clash. The rule, *A posse ad esse non valet consequentia* ("A conclusion from the possible to the actual is not valid") is not respected here. Even when we examine such a utopia, a technological novel, for instance, we find that its utopian nature does not lie, as one might think, in the technical theme which the author develops. A writer who tells us of cities with moving streets where every house is a perfect residential mechanism, every roof has an airport, every housewife receives provisions in her kitchen through an unfailing system of tubes; who assures us that these cities are built of a substance which glows gently in the dark, and that the silken garments worn there are made from refuse, or from cottage cheese—that writer is not yet truly utopian. For all this, whether it will be achieved or not, lies within the possibilities of technical organization. We are content to state that such contrivances are possible, and disregard for the time the question of what would be gained if such a state were reached. The tale becomes utopian only when the writer leaves the sphere of technical organization—when, for instance, he tries to make us believe that these cities are inhabited by better and more perfect human beings; that envy, murder, and adultery are unknown; that neither law nor a police force is needed. For in so doing he steps outside the technical scheme within which he is spinning his fantasies, and combines it in a utopian manner with something different and alien which can never be developed out of the scheme itself. This is why Bellamy is more of a utopian than Jules Verne—the latter sticks closely to the technological scheme. A social utopian like Fourier believed in all seriousness that, if only his theories were accepted and applied, the very salt water of the sea would turn into sweet lemonade and the whales would cheerfully harness themselves to the ships. Thus he ascribed to his ideas a power mightier than

song of Orpheus, and this even after his model community, Reunion, had broken down. Such exuberance of the mind is culous, unless one happens to be among those who are ruined it.

And yet, any system rounded enough to awaken a response our minds needs a grain of utopian salt. The theory of Comte nishes an example. We see it more clearly today when itivism is everywhere on the retreat and even has to surrender hereditary possessions in the various sciences. Apparently we e already passed through that third and highest stage of human lution, the "positive" one, which Comte pretended to have ieved for himself and for his theory, and his motto, "See, in er to foresee; foresee, in order to forestall," is no more valid ay than the whole natural hierarchy of sciences he erected. ere is something separatistic about Comte's theory; at its bottom, re is a certainty that we have lost. When life enters into new es of danger all things change, the observer as well as the ervations. Positivism is always an occupation for settled times.

The Delusion of the Saving of Labor

Those who place their hopes in the machine—and hope imes an anticipation of the future—ought to be aware that the es themselves must be of a technical kind, for one cannot ect from the machine something which lies outside its poten- ities. They must distinguish the machine from the chimeras ich have become associated with it and which have nothing to with its purpose. There is, for instance, a wide-spread belief t the machine relieves man of work, that thereby he gains ture and time for free activity. This belief in many cases is shakable and unexamined. Where one comes across it, one ses that it is one of the props which uphold technical progress, tify it, and secure an optimistic view of the future. Obviously, machine which does not profit man appeals to no one—optimism needed in this connection also. But we are here dealing with assertion, the validity of which has not been established, and antant repetition gives it no greater conviction.

Leisure and free activity are not accessible to everybody, and y are conditions in no way connected with the machine. A n who is relieved of work is not thereby capable of leisure; a n who gains time does not thereby gain the capacity to spend s time in free activity, for leisure is not a mere doing-nothing, tate that can be defined negatively. Leisure, to be fruitful presup- ses a spiritual and mental life from which it draws its meaning d its worth. And *otium sine dignitate* (leisure without dignity")

is hollow, empty loafing. Nor is leisure, as many seem to think, mere intermission in work, a limited time—no, by definition it is unlimited and indivisible, and from it originates all meaningful work. Leisure is the prerequisite of every free thought, every free activity. And this is why only the few are capable of it, since for the many, when they have gained time, only kill it. Not everyone is born for free activity, or else the world would not be what it is. Thus, even if the machine did relieve man of work, this would give no guarantee that man would profit by the time gained and use it intelligently. The unemployed worker who does not have the capacity goes to pieces; because he does not know what to do with the empty time that befalls him. Not only does he have no use for it—it even harms him. He loses heart; he thinks himself degraded because he no longer fulfills his function. He has neither strength nor urge for free activity, and since he has gained nothing but empty time, he is barred from all leisure and the abundance of free activity which stems from creative thought. No connection whatsoever exists between the reduction of work and leisure and free activity; as little, in fact, as an increase in the speed of locomotion implies a rise in morality, or the invention of telegraphy an increase in clear thinking.

Still, it is not idle to ask whether the machine has raised or lowered the amount of work. This is a broad problem which cannot be related solely to the totality of technical and manual labor. We must also ignore the fact that work, by definition, is somehow without limit, that there is always more work than mankind can do. We must try to find the actual amount of working effort to which man is subject. Here we must not allow the legal rules and limitations of work hours to mislead us into hasty conclusions; for these legal limitations tell us nothing of the work actually accomplished, nor do they tell what further claims are made upon the worker by the technical organization outside of working hours. Many believe that in the past men used to work more, that it was longer and harder than today, and when we examine specific information on this point we shall find that this belief is often well founded—in those instances where machine labor has displaced hand labor.

But if we disregard details and consider the technical organization as a whole, we realize that there can be no question of a reduction of the total amount of work. Rather, technical progress has constantly increased the total amount of work, and this is why unemployment spreads so far whenever crises and disturbances upset the organization of machine labor. But wh

es no one calculate this increase of work? The man who looks a single machine is caught in a naive illusion. There can be no doubt that a bottle-blowing machine produces incomparably more bottles than did the bottle blower who used to make them laboriously by hand. A power loom does incomparably more than did the weaver with his hand loom, and one single worker in a mill can attend to several machines at once. A threshing machine does the work more quickly and more smoothly than the peasant who beats his grain with a flail. But such comparisons are childish and an insult to intelligence. The bottle-making machine, the power loom, the threshing machine are only the end product of a vast technical process which encompasses an immense amount of work. One cannot compare the performance of a specialized machine with that of one craftsman, for the comparison is meaningless and futile. There is no machine product which does not involve the entire technical organization, no beer bottle and no suit which do not presuppose it. Consequently, there is no work process which can be treated as independent and isolated from this organization, as if it existed by itself like Robinson Crusoe upon his desert isle.

No one has any doubt that the amount of work done by machines has grown. But how could it have grown without a corresponding increase in the amount of work done by men! For the human hand is the tool of tools, the tool that has created and now maintains the whole machine-tool arsenal. Never and nowhere does machine labor reduce the amount of manual labor, however large may be the number of workers tending machines. The machine replaces the worker only where the work can be done in a mechanical fashion. But the burden of which the worker is thus relieved does not vanish at the command of the technical magician. It is merely shifted to areas where work cannot be done mechanically. And, of course, this burden grows apace with the increase in the amount of mechanical work. No complicated calculations are needed to see this. It is sufficient to observe carefully the relation of the individual work process to the whole technical organization. This observation shows that every advance in mechanization brings with it an increase in manual labor. Those who are not convinced need only consider that our working methods are not restricted to one nation, or one continent. They strive to master all the nations of the earth, and the biggest share of hard and dirty work is piled upon the shoulders of people who have no part in the invention of the technical organization.

FRIEDRICH GEORG JUENGER

BOOK REVIEWS

France's Paganism and Ours

FRANCE PAGAN?

By Maisie Ward

Sheed and Ward, \$3.00

Over the weekend of January 15, 1944 there died in a tenement in Paris (of fume from a disordered coal stove) one of the most famous of contemporary French priests.

He was Abbe Godin, who headed the so-called "mission priests" (priest-workmen) who were to begin their work in the Paris slums and factories on the Monday following his death. He had been the greatest responsibility for the work that was beginning and he had the day before prophetically said that now he could vanish.

Abbe Godin was a remarkable priest with a remarkable insight into his time. Let us take his life first, on which Mrs. Sheed has done an inspiring job and which occupies the first section of the book. Godin asked God to take away his vocation to the priesthood rather than let him become a complacent, ordinary priest. He didn't just drift into a seminary and then go along with what training offered. He was always figuring out what it means to be a priest in our time, and how he could acquire the necessary assets. One of his resolutions: "Negative rules: not to be a priest-photographer, or a priest-beekeeper, or a priest-spectator. Simply to be a priest. You don't become a priest for your family, or for your mother, or for your sister, but only for God. The priest's employment is not gardening or entertaining his fellow-priests agreeably. It is saving souls."

Another time he made up a litany to Our Lady, which begins:

From becoming a bourgeois priest, deliver me, Mary.

From forgetting that I am poor, that I have always been poor;

From forgetting those who suffer;

From spiritual selfishness;

From the ecclesiastical spirit; . . .

After he was ordained Abbe Godin became a Jocist chaplain and worked out for Cardinal Suhard (and with the help of another priest) a report on the conditions of the proletariat in relation to the Church. This report was the now very famous *France, Pays de Mission*, here translated and edited as Part II of *France Pagan*?

Now we come to Abbe Godin's observations and theories. He found three types of areas in France. In the first type he placed active Christian communities, not perfect, and suffering from lukewarmness, but still Christian. In the second category he placed areas where the culture and civilization remain Christian but where Christian practice is limited to small groups, relatively isolated from the rest of the community. There is still a Christian basis here for rejuvenation.

The No. 1 problem of the Church in France was (and is) the third category: the areas which have lapsed into paganism, with neither Christian tradition nor Christian practice remaining, where the mores and customs have sunk to a very low moral level.

Abbe Godin's thesis is simply this: for rechristianizing the pagan areas the Church cannot use ordinary conversion methods, much less exhortations to "return" to something which is by now foreign to the mentality of the people. The Church must adapt the methods it has

veloped of evangelizing new pagan territories. It must send missionaries to live among the people, win their confidence and gradually teach them the Faith. It must, moreover, not accept individual isolated conversions *but build up new communities of Christians.*

This last is all important. Appropos of it Godin says that very much of the heroic work of the Jocists has ultimately proved fruitless because their converts could not be integrated into the existing parochial system of the Church. Parish societies are composed of nice, well-mannered boys and girls. The Jocists brought in hordes of hoodlums, marvelously zealous and heroically attached to Christ, but ill-clothed, uncouth in speech and sometimes retaining some shocking habits for a while. They needed a long catechumenate such as the Church gives the Eastern pagans. They could not be respectable parishioners within several generations. Yet zealous as they were they could not hold to the Faith individually, they needed a community. So many lapsed, and their last condition was worse than their first. Others were killed in battle before their zeal waned, and Godin was glad that they were. Until such time as the ordinary parish could accommodate itself to the task of incorporating these new members like Godin and the other missionaries planned to set up new communities where these Christians could gain a foothold in the Church.

The Americans' problem is, "To what extent can Godin's findings be useful to us in analyzing our own situation?" My opinion would be as follows:

There are very few areas in America which ever were Christian, or at least Catholic in their orientation, for our country was pretty secular from the beginning. Most American environments are areas of desultory religious practice combined with a secular mode of life. There are an increasing number of thoroughly pagan sections, where religious practice is ridiculed, both among the depressed proletariat and the intellectual and life society circles. However, in America where one's financial and social standing can change overnight and classes aren't fixed, it is a small matter to put on at least the externals of respectability. It would only take a few weeks to integrate a former prostitute, say, into the parochial sphere, and not much longer into parish societies, if she cared to join them. Our difficulty is that our parish societies are usually as dull as dishwater and have, over a period of years, screened out all except the most patient and complacent members of the Church. We can't integrate our converts, because we haven't anything exciting, vital, contemporary and above all apostolic to offer them. Our parishes live pretty much in the past, when their duty was to gather the faithful around in as large numbers as possible (watering down the dose of Christianity accordingly) to exhort them to remain firm. Now it would be better if they went in for training select groups of shock troops according to one of the new techniques of Catholic action or the Legion of Mary, and used these as spearheads into a secular world to turn it to Christ. Maybe this is what the Abbe wanted in France. One gets hints. Certainly the dynamism which is welling up in the Church will have to be channeled soon if it is not to be scattered and ineffectual.

CAROL JACKSON

Mystical Philosophy

TRANSFORMATION IN CHRIST

By Dietrich von Hildebrand

Longmans Green, \$4.50

The Church characteristically clothes its mystical ideas in religious imagery derived from the terminology of human love. Here

a man of great learning and wide culture, writing about the spiritual life in at least a semi-mystical vein, who characteristically uses the bare abstract language of philosophy and sociology, speaking of "response value," "inter-personal situations," "tensions" and using words like "signalize" and "happify." By pointing these out I do not mean to disparage the book or its author but rather to identify the sort of spiritual book it is. Throughout I was tempted to call it mystical *philosophy* rather than mystical theology. This is at once its merit and its shortcoming.

To speak first of the merit, Professor von Hildebrand really goes far in integrating true philosophy with spiritual experience. To my mind his most successful chapter is that on "True Simplicity" in which he shows the contrast between the over-simplification of experience that characterizes fools and the unity and harmony of life which one experiences as one draws near to God Who is Himself Oneness. Here, as in most of the chapters, the author makes a careful, analytical study of the problem and with good psychological insight describes types of people who miss true spirituality. He sees pretty clearly the aberrations of the mildly neurotic in this regard.

One reason I particularly liked the chapter on simplicity is that it not only enlightened my mind but also moved my heart, this latter being something that the rest of the book usually fails to do. Here we come to the drawbacks of the philosophical emphasis. It is too much on the level of human reason, whereas theology, without denying reason, always centers about the mysteries of faith and therefore calls faith into play in understanding it (or should). So Garrigou-Lagrange, whose theology is very analytical and just bare bones, nevertheless raises your heart and mind to God pretty consistently. The reader of this book by von Hildebrand will usually find himself dropping back into culture and learning. At least this is what I found.

Most disappointing to me is his chapter on "Recollection and Contemplation" where he fails to emphasize, at least with proportionate stress, the utterly transcendent and supernatural character of Christian contemplation. I would quarrel with him too about the relationship between contemplation and action, as he doesn't seem to grasp the Thomistic view of contemplation flowering into action, a point which is fundamental to the lay apostolate. Therefore we find him picturing a lay life which is devout and recollected (von Hildebrand is certainly a good antidote to activism) but apart from the main stream of life today. It is the sort of life possible to a cultured intellectual, but not the sort open to a cultured modern barbarian riveter or truck driver. But then it will probably be another generation before the genesis of Catholic Action is realized before it will be generally understood that grace, using the lay apostolate as a vehicle, can raise up other Christs in the very centers of all that is unlovely in the modern world.

PETER MICHAELS

The Seed and the World

THE PASSION OF THE INFANT CHRIST

by Caryl Houselander

Seed and Ward, \$1.75

Miss Houselander has a rare and wonderful gift, the ability to guide through the land of familiar things helping us to see with new eyes and know with new hearts the glory of the works of creation. She does so with a disarming simplicity, which is the simplicity of her subject, the infant Christ.

There is a sense of wonder throughout the book, the wonder of seeing the Creator alive and anew in the things of His creation. We are told the Gospels of the man who sowed his field with clean seed, and Miss Houselander uses this analogy to tell us of the in-dwelling of Christ. As seed of wheat rests and grows to fruition in the warm, moist earth, so does the Christ-life rest and increase in the hearts of those who receive it. And because we are weak and young in the way of Christ, He comes to us first as an Infant, trusting in us as He trusted the arms of His Mother. Perhaps the most beautiful part of the book is the chapter on Rest.

It is not, we learn, the rest which means idleness, but the rest which is an overflow of love and peace and surrender, and in which Christ is born into our souls. In the fullness of the Host-life, He lives in us, and in Him.

Seed and snowflake, sunset and ebb-tide, rest and labor, all these are familiar things, and yet it seems at moments that we see them for the first time in the light of the divine pattern. In the words of Miss Houselander's beginning: "There are some truths which need to be told over and over again."

J. M. P.

Woe to Ye Rich

RICH AND POOR IN CHRISTIAN TRADITION

edited by Walter Shewring

Horns Oates & Washbourne, London, 10S 6d

Integrity, *The Catholic Worker*, or any other of the so-called radical publications of today, seems pretty pale when stacked up against the thunder-voice of Mother Church on the subject down through the ages. Or perhaps I do *The Catholic Worker* an injustice. Certainly it has written truthfully on poverty, and Peter Maurin's expression for beggars, "The Passadors of God," is in the most orthodox tradition.

Be that as it may, the English editor of this book has translated and brought together the writings of famous ancient doctors of the Church, the modern social Popes, of Saint Thomas and Saint Catherine of Genoa, Bossuet and others (with the notable exception of Saint Francis—perhaps he did not write anything) and topped it off with a magnificent introduction of his own. The book contains some pretty strong statements, such as Saint Jerome's "Every man of riches is either a rogue or a rogue's friend" and Saint Peter Damian's "No festering wound stinks more unbear-

Anything that has ever been said about poverty (to my memory) by

ably in God's nostrils than the dung of covetousness." The ordinary tale of the book is only slightly less vigorous. The position consistently taken is certainly at variance with modern practice and attitudes of Catholicism. What is even more impressive is the absolute unanimity of the writers in respect to their subject.

It does not say in this book that it is all right to be rich if you have your money right (you have to earn it honestly, which is barely possible or inherit it from someone who did and anything superfluous belongs to the poor by right). Nor does it say that the eye of a needle through which the rich have to go is a mountain pass, nor that the Church needs the rich (the Church is the Church of the poor, and the rich are not allowed in it to relieve the sufferings of the poor). There is nothing from the first to the last page which would in any way comfort or justify or encourage the thousands of contemporary young Catholic men and women who are breaking their necks to become rich.

Let the poor read this book to learn of their eminent dignity and cease trying to better their material lot. Let the rich and the avaricious read it if they dare—and see what it does to them.

CAROL JACKSON

REPRINTS

RHYTHM, THE UNHAPPY COMPROMISE, by **Rev. Hugh Calkins, O.S.M.**, has been reprinted and is now available at 10¢ a single copy; **30 or more**, 5¢ a copy.

THE MEANING OF GOD by **Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard**, reprinted in its entirety from our Feb. issue: 25¢ a copy.

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(Edited by the Dominican Fathers—River Forest, Illinois)

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Father Martindale's PORTUGUESE PILGRIMAGE (\$2.75) fills some background for the shrine and story of Fatima: the landscape, cities and people of Portugal, a little of their history. The shrine itself he calls "the heart of modern Portugal," but he is not sure that Our Lady's message has always been best understood by those most enthusiastic about it.

Let us remind you, to end up with, of four books already advertised here, which you may have meant to get hold of, and then forgotten: **RELIGION AND CULTURE** by **Christopher Dawson** (\$3.50), **FRANCE PAGAN?** by **Maisie Ward** (\$3.00), **THE PASSION OF THE INFANT CHRIST** by **Caryll Houselander** (\$1.75), and **SAINT PAUL** by **Robert Sencourt** (\$5.00) which Ed Willock likes so much.

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